

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for July 12, 2015. You know that Maintenance of Way is always on the level. And, this week, we were leveling things both east and west. So, let's keep things parallel with the horizon by getting this update underway right now.

The mighty Weed Team headed to Hood on Tuesday for a day of exciting defoliating fun. Mike Taylor, Dave Megeath, and Joe Galipeau were fed-up with the uneven nature of the weeds encroaching on the roadway to the storage container at the south end of the line. So, they deployed the field-and-brush mowers to level it all out. Then, just for kicks, they surveyed the poison oak along the line to judge success their earlier eradication attempts. Not surprisingly, Mike, Joe, and Dave walked away itch-free. The Weedies do incredible work. The next time you bemoan doing yard-work (um, guilty), just think about the efforts of these dedicated volunteers who "garden" the entire 17 miles of the Sacramento Southern Railroad. They keep the, "Each day is one day closer to Hood," dream alive.

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Chris Carlson, Heather Kearns, Steve Nemeth, Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Frederick Carr, Gene Peck, Frank Werry, Mike Harris, and Harry Voss brought balance to the Force. Chris Carlson took a vacation day from his paid gig to work on the *USS Sea Tiger* – a.k.a. the ballast regulator. He managed to solve a number of the problems it was having. Alan got the exhaust system and the air cleaner installed on the Super B spiker. Then, he spent the rest of the day enjoying his golden years by painting the spiker MOW-Team-yellow. Mike H. took on the role of "leak detector" by taking the leaking control mechanism on the spiker apart. Pat and Gene gave great advice. Fred helped Chris. Heather worked on the malfunctioning weed-mower. Steve replaced three filters on the spiker and on one on the field-and-brush mower. The Railroad truly is fortunate to have such highly skilled and dedicated people volunteering on its behalf.

By Thursday, Mike H., Frank, Fred, Alan, and Heather were planning the next stage of the Miller Park Mainline rebuild. Frank and Mike H. grabbed a couple 55 gallon drums of diesel fuel and headed to Old Sacramento to top-off the scarifier-erector and Kalamazoo-tug. Then they pumped a gallon or 30 into new-old tamper in the Erecting Shop. Alan was making something. I'm not quite sure what. But, it made lots of sparks. Then he went back to painting. Fred removed the hydraulic filter from the *Sea Tiger* to figure out why it was leaking. It turned out to be a bad gasket. Quartermaster Heather has ordered a new one. In addition, track jacks and lining bars were loaded into the MOW Team's trusty Chevy Truck for Saturday's leveling adventure at Miller Park. Indeed, it was an evening of good accomplishments.

The early crew experienced a beautiful sunrise over Old Sacramento on Saturday Morning while staging all the equipment being sent out on the line. Many thanks to prospective brakeman and early-riser, Dusty Galland, for his help in switching our equipment for deployment. Over in the Erecting Shop, Harry brought the big pink box of fresh doughnuts early so that Pam Tatro, Alan, Steve, Heather, Mike Miller, Michael Florentine, and Frank would experience no doughnut delay time. The Team would commence the next phase of the Miller Park project which was the leveling the track. A significant cross-level issue had developed on the Miller Park Mainline where the west rail was lower than the east. Considering that there is a gentle curve to the east through Miller Park, the lower west rail presented a reverse-elevation situation. So, the Team headed south with a truck load of track-jacks and track-levels to start the leveling process. Track-jacks weigh about 60 pounds each. So, Mike M., Heather, Pam, Fred, and Steve transferred the jacks from the truck to the motorcar for transfer to the work-site. We would work south-to-north. The jacks would be placed between every fourth or fifth tie. Levels were placed on the track and, using lining bars, the jacks would lift the rail until the track was level. At that point, Harry in the tamper came in to tamp the track and shove rock under the ties to support the new level. As the tamper approached a jack, Mike F. would shake the jack loose and put it aside. Then, Steve, with the Nolan track-cart, loaded the jacks for redeployment further north up the line. The process would then start over. It really was quite an impressive assembly line as Steve, Pam, Heather, Mike M., Fred, and Frank all traded off leveling, lifting, tamping, and relocating jacks.

After lunch, Steve continued working with the tamper, both as operator and guiding from the ground (not at the same time, of course). Alan, who had made a presentation about the MOW Team to the Docent Class at the Museum, returned to the work-site on the train that carried the class. Although several Team members had to leave after lunch, those remaining were able to level, lift, and tamp another segment of track. Throughout the day the Team was working within the South Approach Circuit to Front Street. As our machines all trigger the gongs and gates along the line, our good friends with the Signal Department have stepped-up to assist us every week of this project. On Saturday, Dale Parker and Joe "Two-Drops" Galipeau were on site to deactivate the Front Street signals and operate the system manually for every train of the day. The MOW Team owes Team Signals a big debt of gratitude for their dedication to this project.

By the 3 o'clock hour, a couple more members of the Team members needed to leave. So, with three folks remaining on site, tools and equipment were packed up and we headed back to town very pleased with the accomplishment of leveling about half of the Mainline through Miller Park. The leveling phase of the project will continue next Saturday.

This coming week, the Weed Team begins its summer recess. The Weedies will reconvene on August 11th. But, the Tuesday and Thursday Shops crews will continue spending their afternoons and evenings busy in the Shops. Doors open at or before 5 o'clock. Saturday, the leveling continues at Miller Park. Join the fun starting at 8 o'clock a.m. Many thanks to everyone for dedicating so much time and effort to the MOW Team! The Team is doing great work making the track safer and more durable for all of the Railroad's volunteers and passengers!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Alan making lots of sparks



Steve replacing filters



Mike H. and Frank bring a drum of diesel to top-off the tamper



Alan enjoying his "golden" years...



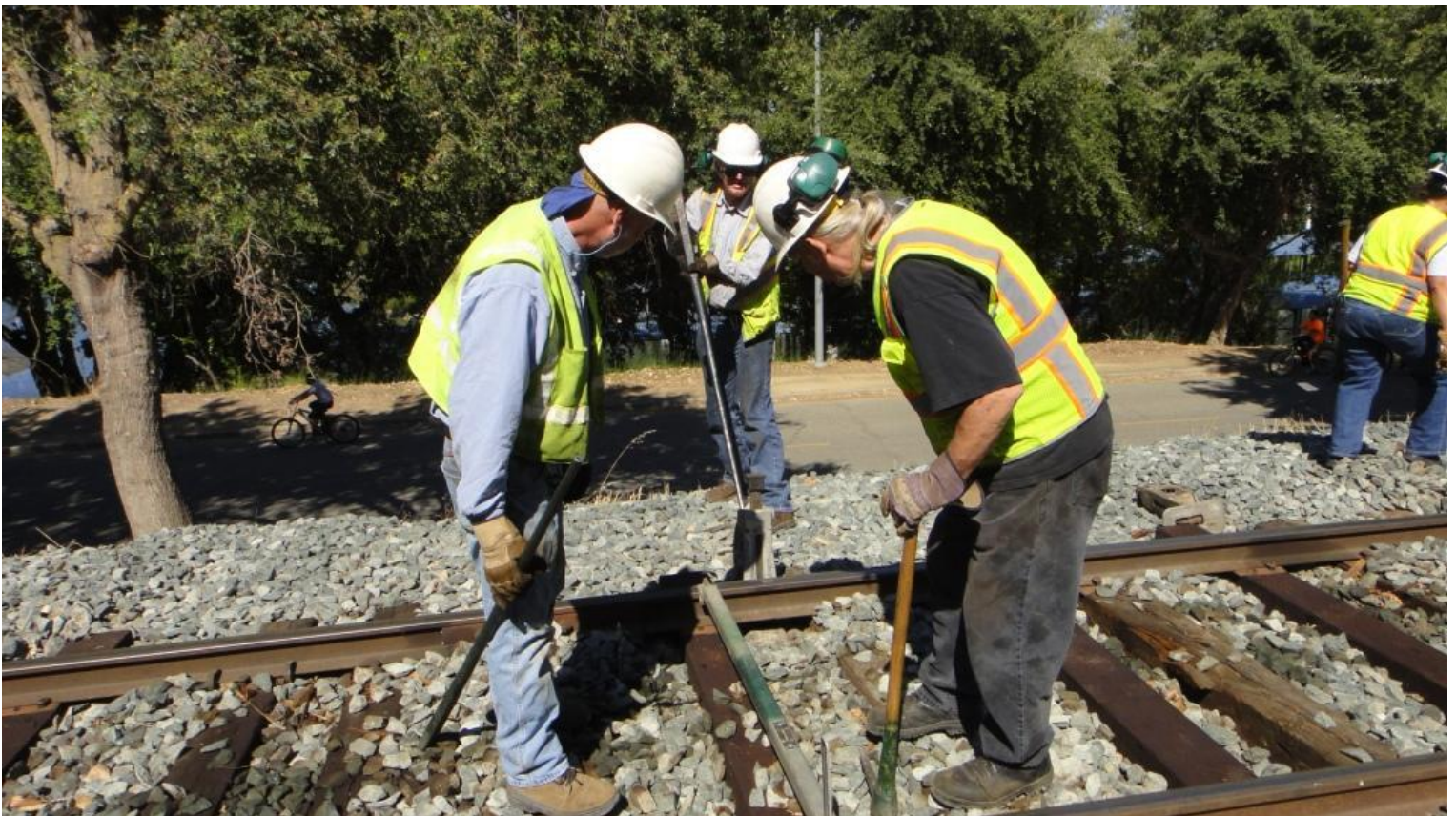
Mike M., Pam, Fred, Heather, and Steve load track-jacks onto the bench car for the ride to the south end of the line



Using track-levels, the team deploys track-jacks along the low west rail



Mike M. checks the level as Heather jacks-up the west rail



Mike M. and Fred check level as Steve manages the track-jack



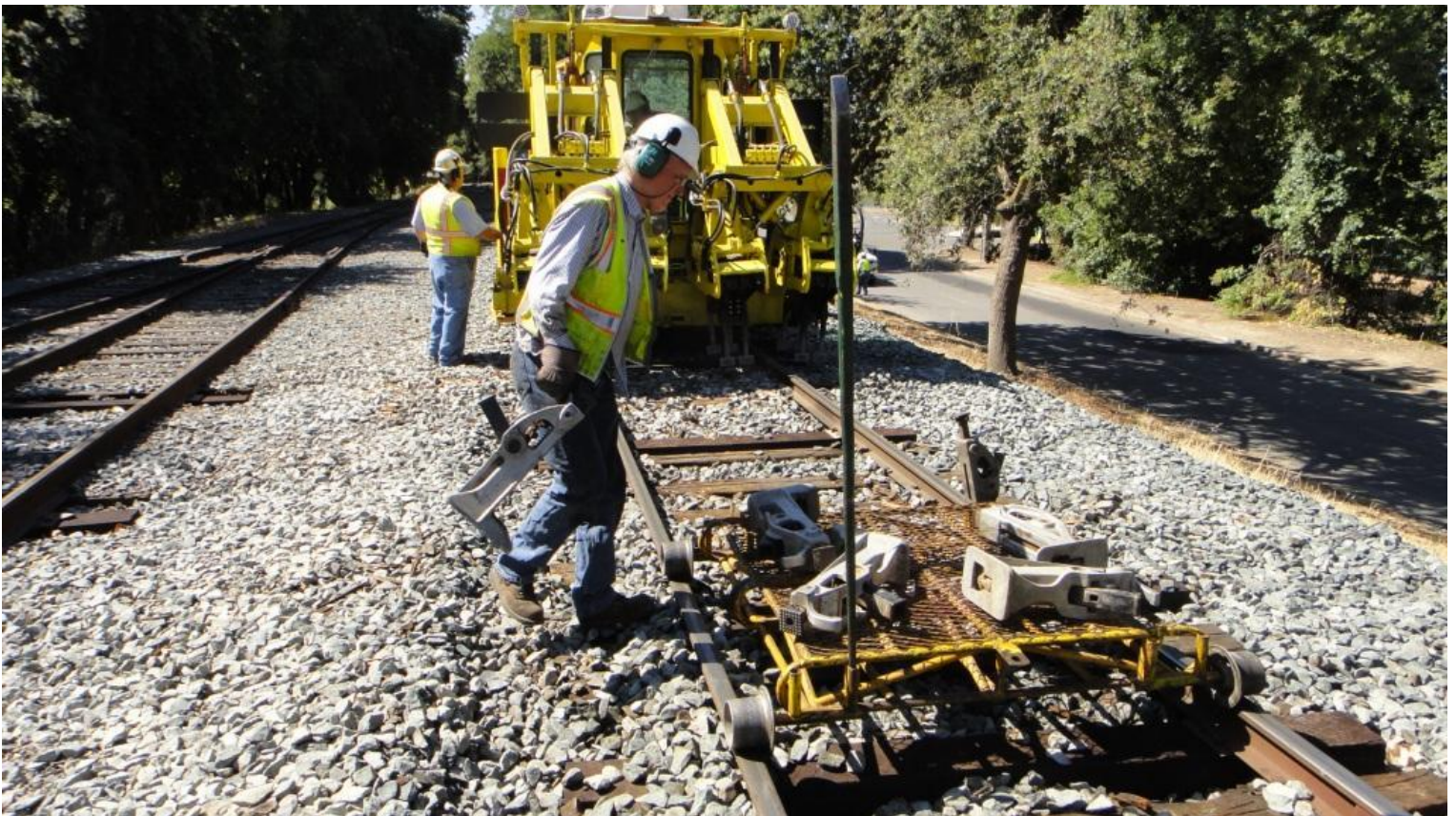
Mike F. guides Harry in the tamper as the tamper tamps the track at its new level



Track-jacks standing at attention like soldiers



Mike F. removes a jack as the tamper comes in to build support under the track at its new level



As the tamper tamps the track at its new level, the jacks are removed. Steve loads jacks onto a Nolan Track Cart to send up the line to the next section track to level



Pam removes a jack from the Nolan Track Cart at the next section of track to be leveled



We had a production line going out there. It was quite impressive



Steve guides the tamper from the ground to make sure that no ties are accidentally "speared"...



Queue the ominous music: management arrives on scene...



Frank prepares to remove a jack as the tamper approaches



Hey, don't argue with the bubble. The bubble spells "SUCCESS!"